

## DID YOU KNOW?

Almost **80 percent** of all false alarms are caused by **USER ERROR**. There are easy steps you and your alarm dealer can take to prevent false alarms.

### ....YOU CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE!

Help law enforcement reduce unnecessary response and enhance the effectiveness of your alarm system. Do your part to prevent false alarms.

#### FALSE ALARMS:

- Take Deputies Away from other pressing matters.
- Are a Nuisance to you and your neighbors.
- Make your security system less reliable.
- Make you reluctant to use your system.

False Alarms present a serious threat to the effectiveness of your local Sheriff's Office and to the safety of the citizens.

False alarms are costly and dangerous because they divert deputies from proactive crime prevention efforts. They also delay response to calls that may be true emergencies.

**Please Note:** Should you decide to have your alarm system removed you will need to:

- 1.** Notify the FARU's Alarm Administrator in writing and request to have your Alarm Registration be closed, and as to why: i.e. you no longer have your Alarm System or you have moved.
- 2.** The Alarm Company will also need to notify us via fax that your account has been closed or removed, and that they are no longer monitoring you.

**False Alarm Reduction Unit**  
**30 N. Market St**  
**Frederick MD 21701**

**Phone (301)600-3474**  
**Fax (301) 600-2309**  
[www.frederickcountymd.gov](http://www.frederickcountymd.gov)

## False Alarm Prevention



**FREDERICK COUNTY**  
**PERMITS AND**  
**INSPECTIONS**

**False Alarm**  
**Reduction Unit**

## WHAT IS A FALSE ALARM

Across the nation, laws typically define a false alarm as any alarm signal that elicits a response by law enforcement officers for which there is no evidence of criminal activity to justify a response. This simply means that if an officer responds to an alarm activation and, after investigation, finds no evidence that criminal activity either had occurred or was occurring, the officer will designate the alarm signal as a false alarm. A false alarm may be caused by factors such as human error or equipment malfunction.

With yearly increases in burglar alarm systems nationwide, law enforcement is becoming overwhelmed with false alarms. This is resulting in stricter regulations; severe fines and/or “no response” policies.

## MAJOR CAUSES OF FALSE ALARMS ARE:

Unlocked or loose doors, kids, neighbors, relatives, visitors, repairmen, cleaning crews, pets, user error, equipment malfunction.

### AT HOME:

Avoid objects that trigger your alarm:

- Unlocked, loose fitting, or open doors or windows. Always keep doors and windows locked when the alarm is in an **ON** mode to reduce the chance that friends, neighbors or customers enter and cause the alarm to activate.
- Unsupervised pets – If you have pets, take special care to purchase an alarm system that is tolerant of pets. You may not want to purchase motion detectors if

your pets have free run of the house when the alarm is on. Also, sometimes barking dogs may activate glass break detectors.

- Mylar balloons
- Drafts that move plants and curtains

### AT YOUR BUSINESS:

Watch for these pitfalls that may activate your alarm:

- Swinging doors or windows.
- Banners or signs.
- Plants or curtains caught in drafts.
- Stacked items, such as boxes, which may fall setting off the motion detector.
- Unsupervised guests.
- Untrained, unaware, or uncaring employees.
- Alarm equipment such as motion sensors or overhead door magnets being hit by forklifts.

### WITH PEOPLE:

Enhance your alarm system potential:

### KNOW WHAT TO DO IF YOU SET OFF YOUR ALARM BY ACCIDENT:

- First don't panic. Enter your disarm code (carefully) to reset your system.
- Wait for your alarm company or central monitoring station to call, give your password, ID card number
- Do not leave your home or business until you have talked with your monitoring station. If they do not call you, have the number posted by your keypad and contact them to cancel the police dispatch. Do not call 911 to cancel alarm activation. You can arrange to have your monitoring station

call you or another designated person first before the police are called whenever your alarm is activated. If you are aware of the problem with the system, you can cancel the police dispatch.

### BEFORE YOU ACTIVATE YOUR ALARM SYSTEM:

Are you and others who use the security system fully educated on its proper operations? This may include domestic/cleaning crews, children, neighbors, caretakers, employees and temporary staff.

- Make sure you securely close and lock all protected doors and windows.
- If you are leaving your home or business, make sure the door you leave by is closed tight.
- Keep pets, fans, heaters, etc. away from motion sensor areas.
- Know and rehearse the process to cancel an accidental alarm. Anyone with your key should know this process.
- Know how much time you have after you arm your system to leave and to disarm your system when you enter.

If you have apprehensions about using your system, call your alarm company **TODAY!**

Contact your alarm dealer if you plan any home improvements or renovation projects; i.e., changing phone systems, configuration of a room, adding a wall, rearranging cubicles, installing skylights, ceiling fans or even fumigating. Also alert your dealer if you get a pet or hire any domestic help.